

*ike Epithet Romantic.*

gay and frivolous, do you find in more than some rare instances a dignified seriousness take place of their follies ? What is the effect, on the splendid, sumptuous, and fashionable professors of Christianity, of your inculcation (if indeed you venture it) of that solemn interdiction of their habits, " Be not conformed to this world. ? " \* Yet, notwithstanding this melancholy state of facts, some preachers, from the persuasion of a mysterious apostolic sacredness in the office, or from a vain estimate of their talents, or from mistaking the applause with which the preacher has been flattered, for the proof of a salutary effect on the minds of the hearers, or, in some instances, from a much worthier cause, the affecting influence of sacred truth on their own minds, have been inclined to anticipate striking effects from their public ministrations. Melancthon was a romantic youth when he began to preach. He expected that all must be inevitably and immediately persuaded, when they should hear what he had to tell them. But he soon discovered, as he said, that old Adam was too hard for young Melancthon. In addition to the grand fact of the depravity of the human heart, there are so many causes operating injuriously through the week on the characters of those who form a congregation, that a thoughtful man often feels an invading melancholy amidst his religious addresses,, from the reflection that he is making a feeble effort against a powerful evil, a single effort against a combination of evils, a temporary and transient effort against evils of almost continual operation, and a purely intellectual effort against evils, many of which act on the senses. When the preacher considers the effect naturally resulting from the sight of so many bad examples, the communications of so many injurious acquaintance, the hearing and talking of what would be, if written, so many volumes of vanity and nonsense, the predominance of fashionable dissipation in a higher class, and of a coarser corruption in a lower; he must indeed imagine himself endowed with a superhuman power of eloquence, if the instructions expressed in an hour or two on the Sabbath, and soon, as he might know, forgotten *by* most of his hearers, are to leave in the mind something which shall be, through the week, the efficacious repellent to the contact and contamination of all these forces of mischief. But

\* Romfts xii. 2.